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INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 EB-11 PM-09 CIAE-00 INR-10

NSAE-00 RSC-01 DODE-00 OMB-01 XMB-07 TRSE-00 OPIC-12

/089 R

66644

DRAFTED BY ARA/ CEN: SLIPPE: HLH

4-4-73 EXT: 20602

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R 042158 Z APR 73

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

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E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, NU

SUBJECT: MANAGUA RECONSTRUCTION: IBRD PANEL

REF: STATE 26502, STATE 24578

1. SUMMARY: TEAM- LEADER, PROF. JOHN DYCKMAN GAVE BRIEFING ON REPORT IBRD EXPERTS PREPARED AT REQUEST GENERAL SOMOZA (REFTELS). DYCKMAN DESCRIBED MEXICAN PLAN AS INCOMPLETE, PRAISED GON COOPERATION AND NOTED SALIENT POINTS OF REPORT WHICH HAS BEEN SENT TO SOMOZA. FOLLOWING INFO FORWARDED MISSION AND EMBASSY FYI ONLY INASMUCH AS REPORT NOT YET PUBLIC. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST ARE RECOMMENDATIONS BY PANEL THAT A NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION BE FORMED TO OVERSEE REBUILDING EFFORTS AND TO REMOVE THEM FROM THE POLITICAL AREA. END SUMMARY.

2. DYCKMAN EMPHASIZED THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO DISPARAGE MEXICAN EFFORTS BUT NOTED THAT IT WAS VERY PRELIMINARY IN SCOPE. HE ADDED THAT INTERNATIONAL PANEL DID NOT HAVE ACCESS TO FULL MEXICAN PLAN, WHICH TAKEN BY MEXICANS
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WHEN THEY LEFT. PANEL ONLY HAD DESCRIPTIONS OF MEXICAN PLAN. THUS, THEIR ABILITY TO ADVISE GENERAL SOMOZA (WHICH THEIR TERMS OF REFERENCE CALLED FOR) SOMEWHAT LIMITED BY NOT HAVING ACCESS TO EITHER FULL PLAN OR DATA WITH WHICH MEXICANS WORKED. DYCKMAN NOTED THAT TEAM GIVEN COMPLETE AND FULL COOPERATION BY GENERAL SOMOZA AND GON. ANY CRITICISMS THEY HAD OF MEXICAN REPORT BASED MORE ON WHAT THE PLAN OMITTED THAN WHAT IT CONTAINED. HE REFERRED TO MEXICAN EFFORT AS A " SKETCH PLAN", TO DISTINGUISH IT FROM A FULLY DEVELOPED RECONSTRUCTION PLAN.

3. DYCKMAN, PRAISED MEXICAN PLAN FOR DRAMATIZING MAJOR ISSUES, BUT OFFERED FOLLOWING COMMENTS:

(A) MEXICAN PLAN IS NOT AN ADEQUATE GUIDE FOR RECONSTRUCTION

(B) HIGH RISE BUILDINGS SEEM TO HAVE LITTLE SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE IN NICARAGUA.

(C) THE PLAN IS TOO GRANDIOSE FOR THE SMALL PROPOSED POPULATION OF FUTURE MANAGUA AND FOR THE INCOME LEVEL OF THE DAMNIFICADOS.

(D) IN PROPOSING HIGH- RISES AND BROAD GREEN PARKS, THE PLAN WOULD IMPOSE AN ARTIFICIAL PATTERN ON MANAGUA THAT IS POOR CITY PLANNING AND WHICH IS NOT JUSTIFIED BY SEISMIC EVIDENCE I. E. ALTHOUGH THE FAULTS SHOULD NOT BE BUILT UPON, THE WIDTH OF STREETS AND PARKS BY ITSELF WILL NOT PROTECT A FUTURE MANAGUA. THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT OTHER FAULTS WOULD NOT MOVE IN THE FUTURE.

(E) NO METHOD OF CONTROLLING THE POPULATION IS PROPOSED. THE INTERNATIONAL TEAM RECOMMENDS THAT DENSITY BE CONTROLLED THROUGH APPROPRIATE POLICIES.

(F) RATHER THAN BUILDING NEW TOWNS, THE TEAM RECOMMENDS THAT OTHER TOWNS BE BUILT UP AND SERVICES IMPROVED.

(G) PLAN DOESN' T ADDRESS ISSUE OF COSTS OF RECONSTRUCTION OR COSTS AND THEIR STAGING I. E. OVER THREE- FIVE- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TEN YEARS.

4. GIVEN PAUCITY OF INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO IBRD PANEL ON MEXICAN PLAN, DYCKMAN SAID PANEL HAD TO ADDRESS THE BROAD ISSUES UNANSWERED BY MEXICAN STUDY. IN INTRODUCTION HE NOTED THAT TEAM HAD CONFIRMED THAT SEISMIC CONDITIONS IN MANAGUA WERE BAD; THAT WORSE EARTHQUAKES HAD OCCURED IN THE PAST AND THAT IT NOT UNREASONABLE TO EXPECT MORE QUAKES OF THE SAME OR GREATER INTENSITY AS THAT OF DECEMBER 23, IN THE FUTURE. DYCKMAN SAID THAT PANEL THOUGHT IT UNREASONABLE TO AVOID FAULT LINES. GIVEN THEIR PROFUSION IN MANAGUA, AND THE ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGES THIS WOULD IMPOSE.

5. IN DISCUSSING CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES HE SAID THEY WERE THE WORST THE PANEL HAD EVER SEEN. THE DETAILING WAS

VERY BAD; CROSS- BRACING WAS PRACTICALLY NON- EXISTANT. IN SPITE OF PASSAGE OF DECREE NO. 90 SETTING CALIFORNIA ZONE 3 REGULATIONS THERE WERE NO EFFECTIVE CONTROLS. PANEL PROPOSED TWO SEPARATE CODES, ONE FOR HIGH RISES AND ONE FOR SMALLER, SIMPLER BUILDINGS.

6. PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RECONSTRUCTION PROPER WERE SEVERAL:

- (A) IT SHOULD BE BEGUN, EVEN IF MISTAKES WERE MADE
- (B) FIRST PRIORITY SHOULD BE TO RESTORE PRODUCTION
- (C) THERE IS NO " BEST" LOCATION TO REBUILD

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 APR 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973STATE062298
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: SLIPPE: HLH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: n/a
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SECSTATE WASHDC
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730433/aaaahpbq.tel
Line Count: 143
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ORIGIN AR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 STATE 26502, 73 STATE 24578
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 23 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <23-Jan-2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <21 FEB 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 971125
Subject: MANAGUA RECONSTRUCTION: IBRD PANEL
TAGS: EAID, NU, IBRD
To: MANAGUA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005